

aving but a remnant of the family wealth, taking his son's child with him, had fled to Austria, where he had found protection and friendship.

As soon as he could do so Michael gained his way to General Lacey and presented his letters—six of them—which he had brought with him from noblemen and prelates of Naples. The letter given to him by the wayfarer in the little inn he had mislaid, and for the time it had slipped his mind. The old General carefully read the letters, and then greeted the young man very kindly.

"You ask for a sub-lieutenancy," he said, glancing a second time at one of the papers.

Yes, that was the most the youth had dared to seek.

The minister was sorry that he had nothing then to give, and still more sorry that he could not promise anything. As the huntsman at the inn had said before, there were so many noblemen of Austria idle, that good offices wanting incumbents were scarce. However, the young man could not again. The General would not forget him.

Michael did call again—and again—and yet again—and still the same answer.

"Katrina, what shall I do? This is hard. They told me I should be sure of a sub-lieutenancy when they give me the letters in Naples. I cannot enlist as a common soldier. I have risen from that position honorably, and I could not sink back to the level in a strange land."

"Have you found that letter from your strange friend of the Judenburg inn?" asked the anxious girl.

"No. I had hardly thought of it. If the letters of such men as—"

"But we know not who this man may be. Let us find his letter at once."

So they searched and the letter was found in the pocket of a jacket he had chanced to wear on that morning at breakfast at the inn, and had not worn since.

On the very next day Michael Arizzo waited upon General Lacey once more. The old man shook his head sadly when he saw him. But he took the letter, and a wonderful light awoke in his deep-set eyes when he saw the superscription. He broke the seal and read the brief contents.

"Young man, did you know the person who gave you that letter?"

"No, General. He did not give me his name."

"Well, I declare! You are fortunate. It was the emperor himself! Ha! ha! that is the way Joseph II. likes to give his benefits. But he must have conversed with you?"

"He did; yes," answered Michael, hardly knowing what to think or what to believe.

"And he got all your secrets, I'll warrant?"

"Why, sir—I must say—he was rather inquisitive, and I was communicative."

"Well, well, you have asked for a sub-lieutenancy. The emperor is pleased to appoint you captain of his favorite light cavalry. It is a splendid arm of the service, and you had better report for duty at once. I will see that your commission is ready for you on the morrow. Also, you will be entitled to an advance for an outfit."

The youth could never quite remember how he bore himself on that occasion, nor how he got away. His next clear recollection was of holding Katrina to his bosom, while the old count sat close by, and then and there telling the story of his good fortune.

We will only add that Joseph II. never had occasion to regret his kindness to the young Neapolitan. Michael Arizzo became one of his best and most trusty officers.

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